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HITTIN' THE HIGH SPOTS IN MONTANA

MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT

July 2004-June 2005

Hittin' the High Spots

Montana State Library
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The Doncaster Round Barn near Twin Bridges received the 2005 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation

MHS Board of Trustees

Lee Rostad, Martinsdale, President
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Sharon Lincoln, Billings
Tom Siebel, Wolf Creek
James Utterback, Helena
Don Wetzel, Billings

Society Events and Programs

- The Society hosted the 31st Annual Montana History Conference, "Hittin' the High Spots in Montana," in Whitefish, October 28–30, 2004.
- The State Historic Preservation Office organized and co-sponsored statewide historic preservation conferences in Virginia City (July 2004) and Billings (June 2005).
- The 2004 Western Rendezvous of Art events had record attendance, attracting over 600 people. The sales from the quick draw and art show generated $30,500 for art acquisition.
- Annual events at the Original Governor's Mansion—the Holiday Home Tour and Good Old Summertime Day—garnered increased support from local Helena businesses.
- Lt. John Governor Bollinger presented the Governor's Preservation Award to the Doncaster Round Barn Restoration Project. near Twin Bridges, and recognized the owners of properties listed in the National Register at the Society's 2005 biennial Preservation Awards Ceremony.
- The Society and the Helena National Forest cosponsored a number of programs focusing on the Forest Service's 100th anniversary.
- The March lecture series highlighted women's contributions to Montana history. Helena Public Access TV filmed and broadcast many of these programs.
- A week-long history camp for kids organized in cooperation with CommunityWorks! introduced youngsters to Montana history.
- Children's Activity Day summer programs attracted over 600 children.
- MHS *Archaeology Day!* brought demonstrations of prehistoric technology and artifacts to over 150 local elementary school children.
- The Society recorded 140 ninety-second radio spots, "History Half Notes," for broadcast on local stations and potentially statewide.
- The Society organized and facilitated "Pages in History," a monthly book discussion group.
- The Museum Store hosted 12 book signings and lectures for Montana authors.

A history camper shows her handiwork

Friends of the Society Volunteer Activities

Our volunteer corps—the Friends of the Society—is now over 130 strong. The Friends donated 8,302 hours, assisting staff in vital projects that could

not otherwise have been accomplished. Volunteers led group tours of the museum, catalogued artifacts and photographs, prepared food for receptions and gallery openings, transcribed oral histories, assisted with mailings, and helped with events like the Western Rendezvous of Art, Good Old Summertime Day, and Children's Activity Days.

www.montanahistoricalsociety.org

- The Archives submitted over 300 finding aids for collections to the online database Northwest Digital Archives (nwda.wsulibs.wsu.edu/), making these collection inventories accessible online for the first time.

- In partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, University of Montana, and the Montana State Library, SHPO made information about Montana's cultural resource sites available through the online state Natural Resource Information System.

- In a continuing effort to make more of our collections accessible to the public online, the Photograph Archives added 75 collections (over 11,000 images) to the Montana Shared Catalog.

- The Society updated the online index to *Montana The Magazine Western History*.

Society Exhibits

Montana's Museum

Twelve temporary and permanent exhibits hit the high spots of Montana's art and history. Three new exhibits premiered:

- *Painting the Corps: Contemporary Visions of Lewis and Clark.*

- *Teton Views: Paintings by Conrad Schweiring.*

- *Portraits of Native America.*

State Capitol Exhibits

- The Society redesigned and reinstalled the Hall of Governors in the Governor's Office.

- Author Dorothy Johnson and missionary Father Anthony Ravalli were inducted into the Gallery of Outstanding Montanans with display and a ceremony in the Capitol rotunda.

Traveling Exhibits

- *Documenting the Corps of Discovery* traveled to Chinook, Miles City, Billings, and Fort Benton and to Martin, Tennessee

- *A Capital Capitol* traveled to Fort Benton, Missoula, and Polson

- *Hope in Hard Times: New Deal Photographs of Montana, 1936–1942* traveled to Bozeman and Deer Lodge

- *Photographing Montana 1894–1928: The World of Evelyn Cameron* traveled to Chinook

- *F. Jay Haynes: Fifty Views* traveled to St. Louis, Missouri

Preservation Activities

- The State Historic Preservation Office added 19 sites to the National Register of Historic Places in Carbon, Cascade, Daniels, Fallon, Flathead, Gallatin, Granite, Lewis and Clark, Park, Richland, Rosebud, and Yellowstone Counties.

- The Society's National Register Sign Program manufactured 84 plaques commemorating sites in twenty-three of Montana's fifty-six counties.

- The preservation office distributed $78,500 in annual matching support to 15 Montana communities for local preservation work.

Fighting Ringnecks—Autumn by Max J. Woolley, 1992
Gift of the Artist

Awards Received

- State Archaeologist Stan Wilmoth received the 2005 Staff Award for Excellence from the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers.

- State Archivist Molly Kruckenberg received an award from Secretary of State Brad Johnson for her significant contributions to the State Records Committee.

- Women Writing the West named the Montana Historical Society Press book, *Girl from the Gulches*, as a finalist for the 2004 Willa Literary Awards.

- Western Writers of America chose

the *Montana The Magazine of Western History* article, "Desertion in the Dashing 7th U.S. Cavalry" (Autumn 2004), as a finalist for their Spur Award.

Major Fiscal Year 2005 Grants, Donations

- The Liz Claiborne Art Ortenberg Foundation continued to fully support the Montana Heritage Project.

- The Society received cost-share assistance from the Bureau of Land Management to facilitate electronic data sharing with the State Historic Preservation Office.

- Society Board of Trustees member Tom Siebel hired a cultural resources information systems vendor to assess the Society's web presence and create a plan for a new and expanded web site.

- The Lewis and Clark Commission received a grant from the Quest Foundation to support Montana's National Lewis and Clark Signature Events in 2005 and 2006.

- The Department of Commerce granted $50,000 to the Lewis and Clark Commission in support of its Grants Program.

- The Society received three Cultural and Aesthetic Trust grants from the 2004 legislature. The money will be used to identify African American heritage resources in Montana, create an online catalog of Evelyn Cameron photographs, and conduct oral histories with twentieth-century war veterans.

- The Education Office received funding from the Office of Public Instruction to create the footlocker, "To Learn a New Way," which focuses on Montana Indians' transition to reservation life.

- Montana Land Title Association funded the research and writing of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places through a donation to the State Historic Preservation Office.

- The museum began cataloging a significant textile collection and planning textile care workshops, thanks to a grant from the Montana Committee for the Humanities.

- The National Park Service provided $75,000 toward the exhibit, *Neither Empty Nor Unknown: Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark.*

- Ed and Eileen Oberzut initiated an annual donation to support care of the Scriver Center collections.

- Grants from the Friends of the Society enabled the purchase of Native-made reproduction artifacts for the museum and sponsored scholarships for kids attending the 2005 history camp.

Montana Historical Society Publications

- German publisher Verlag für Amerikanistik translated Bill Farr's two-part article, "Going to Buffalo," in the Winter 2003 and Spring 2004 issues of *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, for sale in Germany.

- The Montana Historical Society Press published Francis Thompson's *Tenderfoot in Montana*, edited by Ken Owens, in Autumn 2004 and Ellen Baumler's *Beyond Spirit Tailings* in Spring 2005.

- The Western Historical Association signed a four-year contract with the Society to continue to provide *Montana The Magazine of Western History* to its members.

- The press published the first annual MHS calendar, sold and distributed gratis to members.

Helping Montana Schools Teach History

- The Montana Heritage Project celebrated its tenth anniversary working with teachers and students to promote place-based education. Project 2004–2005 included schools in Bigfork, Brady, Centerville, Chester, Corvallis, Fairfield, Great Falls, Harlowton, Ronan, Roundup, Simms, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs, and Whitefish.

- Montana Heritage Project teachers presented sessions at Montana's MEA/MFT meeting in October 2004 and for the National Council of Teachers of English regional meeting in Lewiston, Idaho, in March 2005.

- Education office staff presented its traveling footlockers at the Indian Education For All Conference in Missoula in October 2004.

- The Montana Heritage Project held its 11th Annual Summer Institute for teachers, June 19–25, 2005, in West Yellowstone.

- The Society assisted the Golden Triangle Curriculum Cooperative with their Teaching American History Grant by conducting statewide educational resource workshops.

Quillwork moccasins made by Mabel Bradley, Gros Ventre, ca. 1900
Gift of E. E. "Boo" MacGilvra

- The Education Office's National Endowment for the Humanities–funded DVD-format curriculum project, *Montana Mosaic: 20th Century People and Events*, moved from research into the production phase with statewide filming accompanied by content review from a teacher advisory committee.

Assisting the Public

- Library, archives, and photograph archives staff assisted 11,638 patrons with research questions in person, by telephone, or via e-mail and answered 440 requests for 4,069 copies of photographs.

- Museum staff assisted 961 individuals or institutions with reference requests in person, by telephone, or by e-mail and answered over 100 requests for photograph reproductions from the museum collection.

- The Society successfully lobbied the legislature to fund two new permanent government records archivist positions in fiscal year 2006.

Bull rider's rigging, ca. 1950
Gift of Ethel LaRock

- The museum produced an illustrated inventory of the plaques and memorials in the Capitol.

- The Society awarded two Bradley fellowships for historians to travel to the Society to conduct research in its collections.

- The preservation office responded to 2,939 requests for information and reviews of projects with potential to impact state heritage properties and archaeological sites.

New Acquisitions, Donations, and Conservation Projects

Research Center

- 1,396 books and maps, 453 feet of archival records, 94 cassette tapes, and 6,569 photographic images were added to the permanent collection this year.

Museum

- The Museum acquired 82 new collections including 289 objects.

- Staff and a contract conservator cleaned and repaired the equestrian statue of Territorial Governor Thomas Frances Meagher.

- Conservation began on the C. M. Russell mural in the Capitol's House of Representatives Chamber.

- The Original Governor's Mansion Restoration Board funded two Mansion restoration projects—the repair of thirteen pieces of furniture and the hanging of lace curtains on the main floor windows.

Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Activities

- The Bicentennial Commission allocated $168,781 in organizational and planning and program grants, funded in part from the sale of Montana Bicentennial license plates and monies received from Travel Montana.

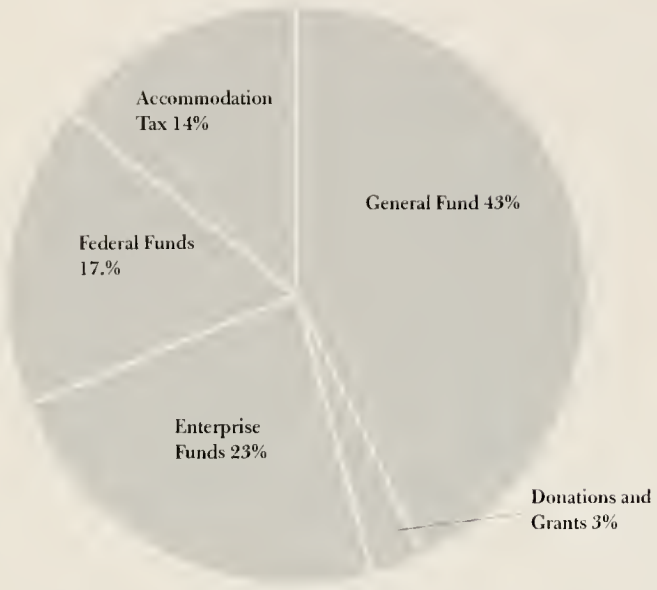
- The Bicentennial reached Montana in April 2005 with a two-state commemorative event in the Fort Union area of North Dakota. From Fort Union, the Corps II program, sponsored by the National Park Service, visited Fort Peck, Glasgow, Fort Benton, Rocky Boy, Great Falls, Helena, Bozeman, Dillon, Hamilton and Lolo.

- The Senate Art Legacy Project is in full swing with artist Eugene Daub designing and crafting a heroic-size bronze bas-relief for display behind the President's podium. The sale of miniature bronzes and bronze and silver coin medallions will finance the program.

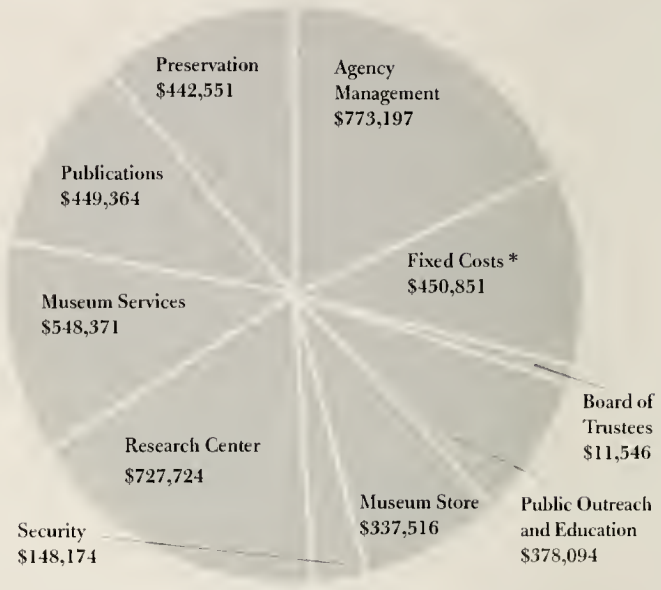
High school students visiting MHS take notes.

Montana Historical Society Fiscal Year 2005 Budget: $4,267,386

Funding



Expenditures



* Fixed Costs include rent, insurance, capitol grounds maintenance

Society at a Glance

- Governed by a 15-member statewide Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor.
- Organized into 5 programs: Research Center, Museum, Publications, State Historic Preservation Office, and Administration.
- Functions with 55 full-time and 24 part-time employees and an annual budget of $4 million.
- Publishes a quarterly western history journal, an electronic newsletter, and three to six books each year.
- Lists Montana properties in the National Register of Historic Places and promotes $3 to $5 million in historic preservation rehabilitation work through tax credit incentives annually.
- Holds in trust for Montana and provides access to over 50,000 books; 455,000 historical photographs; 8,000 maps; 2,000 oral history interviews; 22,000 linear feet of manuscripts and state records; 55,000 artifacts; 8,000 pieces of artwork; 44,800 inventory files for all recorded Montana archaeological, historic, and architectural sites; and 28,000 cultural resource survey reports.
- Owns the Original Governor's Mansion in Helena and manages it with assistance from a citizen restoration board.
- Qualifies under federal tax codes to receive tax-deductible charitable gifts and actively solicits private and public grants.

The Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission, administratively attached to the Society, coordinates with all regional bicentennial commissions, state and federal agencies, and Montana's tribal nations as preparations move forward for Montana's 2005°V2006 Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration. Through June 2005, the Commission granted $ 963,407 to facilitate a wide spectrum of Montana-based Lewis and Clark planning and project developments through its grants program.

The Montana Heritage Project, funded by the Liz Claiborne Art Ortenberg Foundation, is a state-wide professional community of high school teachers committed to guiding students to an understanding of Montana's community cultural heritage, through primary resource research, critical thinking, close reading of regional literature, and excellent writing. Teachers and students in Bigfork, Brady, Centerville, Chester, Corvallis, Fairfield, Great Falls, Harlowton, Ronan, Roundup, Simms, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs, and Whitefish participated this year.

The Montana History Foundation, an independent 501(c)(3) organization, focuses on supporting the Society and its affiliated organizations through its fundraising and planned giving programs. Their goal is to preserve and protect history resources throughout Montana.

The Society's Membership Program financially assists our efforts to provide visitors with rich exhibits, educational programs, and thoughtful interpretation of the West's epic history. Annual membership begins at $45, and includes unlimited free admission to Montana's Museum and the Original Governor's Mansion, a 15% discount at the Museum Store, Recearch Center discounts, a yearly subscription to both Montana The Magazine of Western History and the Montana Post newsletter, and more. To help the membership program generate new revenue and expand its operations, the annual Montana Historical Society Calendar is available through the Museum Store for $8.50.

Hittin' the High Spots

The Montana Historical Society, founded in 1865 and now in its 140th year, has continued to "hit the high spots" through its programs and exhibits. Montanans, tourists, art lovers, and history enthusiasts all benefited from the Society's lively mix of tours, conferences, and public programs. Equally, scholars, genealogists, historic preservationists, and the casually curious made great use of the Society's excellent research collections. School children remained an important constituency for the Society—and we continued our targeted outreach to Montana's future historians.

Our publications, community historic preservation programs, traveling exhibits, and classroom curricula are only a few ways the Society extends its services to the far reaches of the state. Last year we also increased our Internet presence, placing new searchable databases on the World Wide Web.

Partnerships with other agencies and support from private and public funding sources made much of this work possible, and the Society continues to actively seek these connections.

The Society continues to serve as the steward of the Treasure State's treasures—from priceless artifacts to rare photographs, from historic homes to pioneer family diaries, from original paintings to unique sculpture. We invite everyone to explore and discover our extensive and multi-faceted resources.

All elements of our history come together at the Montana Historical Society, and we proudly hit the high spots, sharing this past year's highlights.

Swift Fox by Jay Laber, 2005
Museum Purchase

Lure of the Past

Dear Friends,

Why preserve and interpret our past? There are the obvious reasons: preserving our collective memory, understanding our roots, avoiding past mistakes, and educating our descendents regarding our history. There are other reasons, too, that are just as valid: improving our quality of life, encouraging creative expression, contributing to community engagement, experiencing patriotism by appreciating past sacrifices, enhancing heritage tourism, and simply because it's fun!

The Montana Historical Society strives to contribute to all of these worthy ideals, but we can't do it alone. Our local and regional partners assist us in this daunting task, as does the work of individual citizens. All of you can contribute to this important mission. How? Document or record historical information from elderly friends and relatives who have much to share. Take a few black and white photographs of your family. (Color doesn't last as long, and there is no guarantee that the technology of tomorrow will be able to read the digital photographs of today). Don't store all of your old photographs in one place. Learn how to properly care for your family heirlooms and protect any historic buildings you might own through conversations with Society staff or local experts. Finally, consider bequeathing items to the Montana Historical Society to preserve them for future generations and think about financial donations that can assist us in our mission as stewards of Montana's past.

While you do your part, we continue to do ours. The Montana Historical Society made some significant strides during the recent 2005 legislative session to obtain the space we need to adequately preserve and interpret our history. The state legislature approved $7.5 million in bonding funds to attempt to purchase the Capitol Hill Mall, three blocks north of the current Society building. Our intention is to buy this thirteen-acre and 250,000-square-foot mall and convert it into a new Montana History Center. The Montana History Foundation will soon begin a $30 to $40 million campaign to make this dream a reality. Several studies on the suitability of this use of this property as a history center are ongoing. Look for an update on this exciting venture in the future.

Although the prospect of a new Montana History Center has dominated our attention this past year, we continue to make strides in every area of our organization. Membership levels are increasing, more of our research collections are now available on-line, and demand for our reference materials continues to grow. More educational materials are being developed for students and teachers, we have new exhibits featuring portions of our superb collection, we continue to publish a quality magazine and press books, and we continue to assist in the preservation of historic properties across the state.

It has been a good year, and I predict significant positive change in the years ahead as we improve our technology and venues and find new and better ways to serve our various publics. Please join us as we "hit the high spots" on our way to an exciting future.

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION
2006
MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
1515 E. 6th AVE.
HELENA, MONTANA 59620

Arnold Olsen, Ph.D.
Director

Above: Ice fishing decoy, ca. 1940
Gift of Roberta Jones-Wallace
Front Cover: Montana Highway Department promotional brochure, ca. 1938
Gift of Charles Diggs Greenfield, Jr., and Ann Greenfield Jancic